

Sinclair Broadcasting's decision to force their stations to air an anti-Kerry documentary days before the election is a clear example of the dangers of media consolidation.

Sinclair uses the public airwaves free of charge, and is obligated by law to serve the public interest. But when large companies control the airwaves, we get more of what's good for the bottom line and less of what we need for our democracy. Instead of something produced at "News Central" far away, it's more important that we see real people from our own communities and more substantive news about issues that matter.

Sinclair's actions show why we need to strengthen media ownership rules, not weaken them. They show why the license renewal process needs to involve more than a returned postcard. Thank you.

Sinclair's airing of smears against John Kerry right before the election constitutes flagrant abuse of its role as media owners, and (what might concern some quarters more) constitutes an illegal contribution to the Bush-Cheney 04 campaign. Its CEO has maxed out on his contributions to the Bush campaign, so airing this will take him way over the top.

Sinclair should crap its plans to air this untrue piece and try having some integrity and pride about what it means to report the news and run a responsible station.